

summer of 1931 I found the plant in Stoughton, Massachusetts, first as a single plant in the railroad yard, again as a common weed in waste grassy places in my brother's yard and two adjoining yards on Grove St., and later in other waste places in yards, the extreme localities being perhaps half a mile apart. On 1 Nov. 1931 I found two thriving colonies of the plant in Washington, D. C., the first on the bank of a brook along Klinge Road nearly under the Connecticut Avenue bridge, the second on the summit of a little hill in the National Zoological Park near the monkey and California condor cages.

The rather wide range of the plant in the eastern United States and its apparent abundance when found make it evident that it is destined to become one of our common weeds. It is of the *P. persicaria* group and similar to it in appearance, an annual with nearly prostrate to erect stems and lanceolate to narrowly ovate unspotted leaves. It may be distinguished readily by the slender and usually basally interrupted spikes, small and always trigonous shining achenes (1.8–2 mm. long), and particularly by the long firm bristles terminating the ocreae, they being 4–8 mm. long and about equaling or often surpassing the sheath itself in length.

Polygonum caespitosum var. *longisetum* is a native of subtropical and tropical eastern Asia, and is recorded by Steward from India, China, Japan, Formosa, Philippine Islands, Java, and Sumatra. This area is not a common source for our weeds, and the explanation for the wide distribution of this plant with us is not evident. My suspicion that it might be an ingredient in commercial bird seed is not borne out by the experience of the Seed Laboratory of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, which has never found it in samples of bird seed, although *Polygonum convolvulus* does occur in them.—S. F. BLAKE, Bureau of Plant Industry, Washington, D. C.

AN ESTUARINE VARIETY OF *GRATIOLA LUTEA*.—Some years ago Dr. S. F. Blake¹ showed that the type of *Gratiola virginiana* L. Sp. Pl. i. 17 (1753) is the southern species with very short peduncles, large, subglobose capsules and slenderly linear seeds, *G. sphaerocarpa* Ell. At that time Blake took up for the plant with long peduncles, smaller, ovoid capsule and shorter and thicker seeds, the plant long passing as *G. virginiana*, the name *G. neglecta* Torr. Cat. Pl. N. Y. 10, 89 (1819)

¹ RHODORA, xx. 65 (1918).

and in this he has been followed by Pennell, *Torreyia*, xix. 146 (1919). There is, however, a clearly published earlier name which has been overlooked. This is *G. lutea* Raf. *Med. Repos.* Hex. 3, ii. 333 (1811) and *Am. Mo. Mag.* ii. 175 (1817). *G. lutea* was a direct renaming of *G. officinalis* Michx. *Fl. Bor.-Am.* i. 6 (1803), not L. In 1805, Persoon, recognizing that the Michaux plant is not the European *G. officinalis*, designated it *G. officinalis* β *caroliniensis* Pers. *Syn.* i. 14 (1805), but the first binomial for it seems to be that of Rafinesque.

Michaux was not merely misidentifying an American plant with a European; he gave an original description of the American plant and added the significant observation:

OBS. Europaea universe minor. Caules plerumque simplices, rarius opposite ramosi. Certissime nequidem vestigia filamentorum sterilium.

Asa Gray, studying the Michaux herbarium at Paris, very early recorded in his copy of the *Flora Boreali-Americana* his identification of Michaux's *G. officinalis* as *G. virginiana* of American authors; in 1903, I made a similar memorandum, that the material in Michaux's herbarium labeled *Gratiola officinalis* β . is "our *virginiana*"; and in 1918 Blake, *l. c.* made a similar identification. There is, then, no question that the name GRATIOLA LUTEA Raf. has clear priority over *G. neglecta* Torr. The specific name given by Rafinesque is wholly appropriate. Ordinarily the corolla is straw-color or honey-color; and this typical plant of muddy shores is more or less viscid- or glandular-pubescent, especially on the younger parts, giving the plant a strong citrous odor.

On the tidal estuary of the St. Lawrence a very vigorous and intricately branching *Gratiola* abounds in the mud exposed at low tide about Anse St. Vallier. When I found this plant in full flower in September, 1931, I could not say what it was. The corollas were a clear milk-white and the plants very glabrous, quite lacking the viscid pubescence typical of *G. lutea*. In its glabrous and broad-based leaves the plant strongly suggests true *G. virginiana* (*G. sphaerocarpa*); but its slender peduncles, the internal pubescence of the corolla, the capsules and the seeds are all characteristic of *G. lutea*. If it were merely an albino form we should expect it to show some of the pubescence so characteristic of the species; but, departing in two characters and occurring in great abundance in a characteristic habitat which supports numerous endemic species and varieties, it is better distinguished as

GRATIOLA LUTEA Raf., var. **glaberrima**, var. nov., glaberrima; corollis lacteis.—QUEBEC: tidal mud of the St. Lawrence, Anse St. Vallier, September, 15, 1931, *Fernald*, no. 2539 (TYPE in Gray Herb.).—M. L. FERNALD, Gray Herbarium.

PANICUM VIRGATUM L. VAR. CUBENSE GRISEB. (OR VAR. OBTUSUM WOOD?) IN PLYMOUTH COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS.—During an exciting day of exploration among the numerous ponds near Plymouth, Massachusetts, my encyclopedic and observant guide, Ludlow Griscom, pointed to a queer looking form of *Panicum virgatum* L. which was growing somewhat profusely in the wet gravel of Little Clear Pond. With an uncritical eye, I promptly collected a single specimen under date of August 26, 1928. Less promptly (some three and a half years later) I have examined the sheet in the light of Linder's treatment of certain varieties of *P. virgatum* to be found in eastern North America.¹ If we accept Linder's view that var. *cubense* Griseb. and var. *obtusum* Wood are identical, it appears that the Plymouth plant must be classified as var. *cubense*, and as such constitutes a not unexpected range extension northward from Dennis on Cape Cod and from Westerly, Rhode Island. Mr. C. A. Weatherby concurs, although he cautiously intimates that an adequate series from the Little Clear Pond station would be highly desirable. The pyramidal outline of the panicle, the small spikelets (2.8–3 mm. long) and the subequal palea and second glume, all conform to Linder's idea of var. *cubense*.

While examining pertinent material at the Gray Herbarium for comparison, we were much struck by the totally dissimilar aspects of Wright's Cuban material and the more northern representatives of var. *cubense*, including my Plymouth County plant. Reference to the original description of var. *obtusum* Wood and to numerous collections from Massachusetts to New Jersey suggests very definitely that var. *obtusum* should *not* be regarded as a synonym for var. *cubense*, but as a valid variety with a marked geographical idiosyncrasy. A critical discussion of this point will be deferred until more material from Little Clear Pond is secured as a basis for a well considered opinion.—RICHARD J. EATON, Boston, Massachusetts.

SOME BELATED CORRECTIONS TO MY REVISION OF VERONICA IN AMERICA.—In 1921 appeared in RHODORA (23: 1–22; 29–41) an account

¹ RHODORA, 24: 11–16.